

FORT GANSEVOORT



Zoya Cherkassy: American Cooking

Maggie Turner – August 2026



Zoya Cherkassy, *Katz's*, 2026

After the October 7 attacks of 2023, Zoya Cherkassy arrived in the United States as a double émigré, a unique outsider. She said of her life, “Nothing feels like home to me.” Born in Kiev, Ukraine, in 1976, much of Cherkassy’s early work drew from her experiences growing up in a restrictive Soviet Russia. “People are still afraid of being misunderstood or immediately placed into one camp or another,” she said in an interview. “I don’t think everything has to be reduced to that. Art should leave room for complexity instead of telling people what they’re supposed to think.” At 14, Cherkassy left with her family for Israel, where she could fully embrace her Jewish identity. Now in Long Island, after a move she described as a “panic,” her paintings investigate American life and its layered social fabric. In scenes that picture the contained chaos of Katz’s deli or a family’s close-knit Shabbos dinner, Cherkassy tries “to understand what it means to arrive somewhere that already feels familiar.”